

for lack of a better word

by Craig Middleton

When we broke up for
the last time
there was a mouse
in my living room.
tiny, black,
and lightning fast
as it scurried by my feet.
Listening to your voice
became harder and harder
your tiny voice through
the crackling phone
compared to the elephant
in the room
sprinting first under the rocking chair
then past the TV on mute.
While you were busy pouring
your heart out about how
you were so stupid,
and how you needed to grow up
and get away
I could only think about how to
catch this rodent
so I could drive him off,
set him free.
maybe use that McDonalds bag
with the two pickle chips still
inside.
I'm sorry, what? piece of shit phone,
I can't hear anything.
Good God, it climbed up the drapes
and into the vent

I can hear it in the ceiling
under the floor where
we had
sex
the 2nd time
where we IM'd for hours and
hours every
night
where you ripped off
those CD's
where you cried
and I held you when
my parents were in the
other
room.

And your voice is gone
and the mouse,
suddenly,
is gone too.

And I sit, mouth slightly
open, and
wonder,
"Where the hell
did this thing go?"